

February 25, 2021

**Rapid Response Fund
Southern Border – COVID-19 Shelter and Other Service Needs**

The Administration established the Rapid Response Fund to assist qualified entities in providing shelter, transportation, medical care, and other services to immigrants during emergent situations. This fund is administered by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) which has awarded CBOs with nearly \$12 million to date, supporting over 30,000 individuals in multiple locations across California's southern border.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that starting February 19th, the Port of Entry at San Ysidro has begun processing individuals who had been subject to the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP). The MPP population are people with a credible asylum claim who have been waiting in Mexico and will now be processed for entry to the U.S. DHS has indicated they will begin processing 25 individuals each day and will aim to process up to 300 individuals per day at some point in the future.

Due to COVID-19, screening, testing, and public health measures are needed for newly arriving migrants. According to the federal government¹, the MPP population will be tested in Mexico by an international non-profit organization prior to processing using an antigen test. Each individual being processed for arrival at a U.S. port of entry will arrive with a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) health information card that recommends COVID-19 testing for travelers three to five days after arrival and self-quarantining for seven days, or self-quarantining for 10 days if travelers are not tested. Additionally, all migrants require health screenings for other communicable diseases (e.g. Measles and Tuberculosis) and may require medical care. DHS has indicated that among the MPP population, they will prioritize vulnerable individuals, including people with health issues and pregnant women, for processing.

Up to \$28 million will be made available, on an as-needed basis, to protect public health and respond to COVID-19. This funding is expected to cover the anticipated costs through at least state fiscal year 2020-21. This amount is intended to cover costs in the following categories:

- The Department of General Services for hotels needed for quarantine and isolation.
- A local non-profit provider (Jewish Family Services) to provide wrap-around services including food, transportation and case management services.
- A contract with UC San Diego through Jewish Family Services to provide medical screenings and medical care, including COVID-19 testing.
- Funding includes costs associated with state operations.

State agencies are monitoring the situation at other ports of entry and will provide updates as additional needs are identified.

¹ <https://www.state.gov/public-health-and-the-draw-down-of-the-migrant-protection-protocols-program/>